(iv) Enlarging the scope of Continuing Education to include skill development programme, individual interest programme, rural libraries and removal of residual illiteracy,

(v) State Resource Centres would be strengthened to provide academic and technical resource support to the literacy programmes,

(vi) The activities of Jan Shikshan Sansthans would be extended for creation of self-employment opportunities through vocational training programme.

Free internet access to students/teachers

4412. MISS MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether UGC has promised free internet access to students and teachers in universities across the country as appeared in the media;

(b) if so, what other gifts UGC will offer to the students and teachers; and

(c) the number of universities and colleges that would be connected to the internet and details of information that can be accessed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. VALLABHBHAI RAMJIBHAI KATHIRIA) : (a) to (c) According to the information furnished by the University Grants Commission (UGC), it has been decided to provide internet connectivity to all the eligible universities and colleges in the country recognized under Sections 2(f) and 12-B of the UGC Act, under the UGC-Infonet Scheme. As a result, the students and teachers will get free internet access. UGC-Infonet will allow them to interact with each other allowing easy flow of intra-university information within the country. Under the Scheme, 90% of the total cost of infrastructure is borne by the UGC whereas the remaining 10% is taken care by the respective institution. The entire recurring expenditure is borne by the UGC for a period of 5 years.

Objectives of Operation Black Board

4413. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the main objectives of the Operation Black Board Scheme;

(b) the amount of allocation made to various States for implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme during the last three years;